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ABSTRACT

An English for Special Purposes (ESP) course being developed aims to give the students a series of techniques to help them handle vocabulary in a text, and teach them strategies for identifying meaning in context. Traditional strategies, such as the study of morphology, use of grammatical information, and exercises in dictionary usage, are helpful, but they do not teach the student to be satisfied with a vague notion of meaning. Another strategy, using context clues, has long been advocated, but techniques for doing this have not been worked out. If students are to use context, they need to know the principles of semantic restraint, as operated by context. It seems possible to use insights into meaning from structural semantics in order to elucidate some of these principles. In addition to these insights, the use of nonsense words has been incorporated into vocabulary exercises because the only meaning a nonsense word can have comes from context. Examples are provided of exercises using the following relations: (1) hyponymy, the relation between terms, one of which is included in the other; (2) opposites, including the relations of incompatibility, antonymy, complementarity and converse; (3) synonymy; and (4) other sorts of meaning relations such as rhetorical structure, definitions, and notional and pragmatic relations. (AMH)

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIES FOR THE ASSIGNMENT OF SEMANTIC INFORMATION TO UNKNOWN LEXEMES IN TEXT

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The teaching of vocabulary has long been recognized as a problem any foreign language teacher has to face, particularly at the intermediate and advanced levels. In particular, it is considered important to help students to expand their vocabulary, in order to be able to cope independently with language, in its spoken and written forms. Nevertheless, the development of a methodology for the teaching of vocabulary has lagged far behind the teaching of, for example, grammatical structures, especially, but not only, in ESP courses intended to help students read in their speciality.

In an earlier Unit study (Alvarez, 1976), five ESP textbooks were selected and the procedures used for the teaching of vocabulary were examined. The presentation techniques used, the exercise formats and the activities required of the students were classified, and it was found that there was a surprisingly limited number of actual exercise types in use. They could, in fact, be reduced to five basic types:

i) translation into the learner's mother tongue
ii) paraphrasing (which includes definitions)
iii) ostensive definitions
iv) pictorial procedures
v) contextual inference (seldom used, and never systematically)

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The most disturbing discovery of this study was the fact that the vast majority of the exercises did not, in fact, teach students vocabulary, but rather tested their knowledge of it, or, at best, exercised what they already knew.

Moreover, the exercises did not attempt to develop, in the learner,

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strategies for guessing, or inferring, the meaning of unknown words. This is especially needed in the sort of ESP course we are developing in the UNAM, where it seems to us important, not to teach students the 'meaning' of individual words, in the hope that they will remember them when next they come across them, much less merely to test the students' knowledge of the meaning of words, but rather to give the students a series of techniques to help them to handle vocabulary in text, to show them strategies for meaning identification in context.

In fact, what we need in a reading comprehension course is probably not vocabulary expansion exercises -i.e. the traditional approach to 'teaching' vocabulary- but what have been called vocabulary attack strategies (González and MacKay, 1976). In other words, we need strategies for the assignment of semantic information to unknown words in text. Previous writers, including the article referred to above, have suggested certain ways of teaching such vocabulary attack strategies. However, the exercises proposed are usually somewhat traditional, and, as will be shown, do not solve the central problem, which is that of how to identify at least some of the meaning of a word.

One so-called vocabulary attack strategy, which has been used traditionally for some time, is the study of morphology. The possible morphological changes a word can undergo are presented and drilled and the meaning of the morpheme explained. For example, the relationship may be pointed out between

develop	developer	development
or		
practice	practical	practically

The problem of such exercises is that if the student does not know what the base lexeme (develop, or practice) means, then knowledge of morphological changes is not going to help him to find out.

Similarly, exercises have been developed to help students identify parts

of speech and it is clear that grammatical information can convey meaning. Identifying words as nouns, not adverbs, presumably helps one to divide up the sentence and get at the syntax, which helps one to make predictions as to what the sentence might mean. Nevertheless, useful though this sort of exercise is, it doesn't really get at the heart of the problem, which is the identification of semantic, usually lexical, meaning.

Of course, exercises have existed for centuries teaching students how to use dictionaries and are useful. In fact, they have made pedagogic use of traditional semantic insights, e.g. the notion of polysemy ("mouth of a river", "ear of corn") and hononymy ("bank" meaning "side of river", and "financial institution"). Such exercises, however, confirm to the student that words are important, that it is essential to disambiguate, and to use a dictionary to do this. This seems to us to be unsound, for two reasons.

First, it is not necessary to disambiguate, since it is not important to know the meanings of all the words in text. It is frequently assumed that to understand text it is essential to know what each word means. Such assumptions are not justified, and students should be taught precisely to ignore a proportion of the text. This, of course, is particularly important when teaching students the skill of skimming, but it is also important when attempting to teach students to guess at meaning. Students should be encouraged to read past unknown words to the end of the paragraph, and then to decide on the importance of the word. If, after reading, the whole paragraph it still seems important, then strategies for identifying or guessing at meaning can be utilized. The word by word approach, as well as the testing approach, both ignore a fundamental principle in vocabulary recognition, which is that of vagueness. It is a fact that when we first meet an unknown word in our mother tongue, we are capable of identifying its meaning only very vaguely, and our knowledge of that word's meaning builds up and becomes clearer only

with repeated exposure to the word in different context. Most of the time, in fact, we are happy to operate with only the vaguest notions of the meaning of many words, simply because greater precision is not necessary for the understanding of a particular text. Yet we frequently expect students to be able to define words from first acquaintance (viz. the testing approach).

And yet, when we read, say, Dickens, how many times do we as native speakers actually look up in the dictionary the meaning of unknown words denoting clothes, or vehicles no longer in existence? Surely most of us have been satisfied with a vague notion of the meaning, and have not needed recourse to a dictionary.

Which brings us to our second objection to traditional teaching of how to use the dictionary, namely, that it does precisely that. Whereas we should be encouraging students to throw away dictionaries, to develop strategies for meaning identification within the text and to develop a tolerance of vagueness which presumably they have in their own language.

The other traditional piece of advice handed to students in so-called vocabulary exercises, which in fact approaches what we need, is the advice to 'use the context'. Unfortunately this advice is handed out liberally, without telling students how to do just that. Any work given to students is presented in a totally unsystematic manner, whereas what we need to teach students is how to use context. To do this, we claim that we need to know the principles of semantic restraint, as operated by context. If we could find these principles, we could help students more than by letting them induce from our test items what we cannot be explicit about. Thus instead of exhorting students to use context, we should show them how to, and this, to our knowledge, is not done, anywhere.

However, we believe it is possible to use insights into meaning from structural semantics in order to elucidate some of these principles. In

conjunction with the use of insights from structural semantics (particularly from Lyons, 1969) in the vocabulary exercises we have developed in the Research and Development Unit, we have also incorporated what we consider to be an important methodological innovation, which is the use of nonsense words.

The methodological mistake of all previous exercises, but especially of the testing exercises, is to ask the students to identify the meanings of real words. The objection to this is twofold: one, that some students may know the word itself anyway, and therefore will not be induced to learn the strategy supposedly being taught, and, second, that, regardless of what the teacher tries to teach, the student can ignore him, and go to the dictionary, whereas what he should be learning is how to avoid reliance on the dictionary. If, however, nonsense words, which approximate English words, are used, then the students cannot find the meaning in the dictionary. The only meaning a nonsense word can have comes from the context, which should provide a perfect illustration of the strategy being taught. Moreover, nonsense words are to be preferred to the use of blanks, since blanks do not have meaning, whereas words, even nonsense words, can acquire meaning. Also, using nonsense words in the exercise replicates more nearly the actual reading situation of the student coming across unknown words.

What follows are examples of some of the semantic relations used in exercises developed in the Research and Development Unit materials. Other semantic relations could be exemplified in the same manner.

I. Hyponymy

This is the relation pertaining between terms, one of which is included in the other. Thus 'animal - marsupial - kangaroo'. The more general term is the superordinate, and the less general terms (e.g. "kangaroo, wallaby,

koala bear") are co-hyponyms. We can use this knowledge to construct exercises of the following type.

1. Michael gave me a beautiful bunch of flowers: roses, dahlias, marguerites, chrysanthemums, nogs and orchids.

The student is, as in all the following exercises, asked to guess the meaning of the underlined word, 'from the context', which is, of course, specially manipulated to indicate a certain principle of semantic organisation in text.

In the above example, the superordinate term is given, as an additional clue. In the next example it is removed:

2. Even in the poorest parts of the country, people usually have a table, some chairs, a roup and a bed.

In this case, students must identify semantic features of the unknown word from the meaning of the co-hyponyms. Note that the student is not asked to define the unknown word, but simply to say what he can infer about its meaning from the context. He is being introduced to the principle of vagueness, and being encouraged not to seek the 'meaning' of the word. In fact, he can't get such a 'meaning' since, as the word in question is a nonsense word, it does not exist.

Alternatively to the identification of features of hyponyms, students can be asked to identify the superordinate:

3. Over the last 20 years, our family has owned a great variety of wurgs: poodles, dachshunds, dalmatians, Yorkshire Terriers, and even St Bernards.

II. Opposites

a) Incompatibility

This relation is connected with the concept of hyponymy, in that co-hyponyms are in a sense opposites, or incompatible. For example, in the

area of colours, if a certain colour is not red, then it might be blue, or yellow or green, etc. Similarly, if a colour is red, then it is not yellow, or blue, or green, etc.

This leads to the following exercise:

4. If I don't buy a blue car, then I might buy a fobble one.

b) Antonymy

This relation refers to words like 'big' and 'small' sometimes called gradable adjectives. The interesting thing about this relation is that: 'not big' does not imply 'small'

and it is possible to have sentences which are apparently contradictory, but in reality, are not, as:

A small elephant is a big animal.

It is possible to look at this relation in simple lists, where the position of the word in the list provides a clue to a semantic feature:

5. Repugnant, horrible, ugly, plain, pretty, beautiful, fopple

or in connected discourse:

6. These reactions proceed from the group as a whole, and can assume a great variety of forms, from putting to death, corporal punishment, expulsion from the tribe to the expression of ridicule and the nurdling of cordwangles.

Of course, the unknown word need not be at one extreme or the other of the grade:

7. Catastrophic, terrible, bad, bungay, good, excellent

c) Complementarity

This relation is that popularly called 'opposites', in that the negative of one term is automatically the other term

Thus: 'not male' = 'female'

8. No, John isn't married, he's meed.

9. Well, if it isn't a mungle horse, it must be a female horse.

d) Converse

This is exemplified by the following:

If I give something to Bill, then he receives it from me.

10. Smith bought the house from Jones for $ 20,000 who had paid $ 10,000 for it. Jones thus oweed the house for $ 10,000 profit.

III. Synonymy

It is frequently claimed that true synonyms do not exist. This may well be true of the language as a system, but is patently untrue for any given text. In fact, synonymy is context-dependent, and for this reason, is often used as a cohesive device in text. Thus, synonyms are often identifiable in text by means of other cohesive devices, like anaphora:

11. If you asked an average lawyer to explain our courts, the nerk would probably begin like this: our frugs have three different functions. One blurk is to determine the facts of a particular case. The second function is to decide which laws apply to the facts of that particular durgle.

Or the synonym might refer, not to one word or phrase, but rather to a longer sketch of language, and thus becomes a summary word:

12. It used to be commonly believed that a person's intelligence was affected entirely by the environment in which a person was brought up. This phurgle was particularly common among people who might be thought of as liberals, and a great deal of effort went into attempts to prove that heredity had no influence. The usual subjects of such wandlobows were identical twins...

Apart from semantic relations, other sorts of meaning relations in text can be exploited in the same way:

The rhetorical structure of text can provide clues as to the meanings of unknown words, so students can be trained to pay attention to this also. The use of examples in text may elucidate the meaning of unknown words:

13. Another problem is posed by granged waters, examples of which are the Persian Gulf, the Baltic Sea and the Red Sea, where the extension of limits to 200 miles would close the seas to outsiders.

(This, of course, is the relation of hyponymy, seen from another angle).

Definitions often occur in text, and students should be made aware of the markers of such structures.

14. The purpose of the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference was to find solutions to the problem of regulating fandangle, that is, the use of the oceans by different countries.

Of course, similar exercises are possible with other rhetorical structures, taking advantage of explicit relation markers like 'therefore', 'however'.

Other meaning relations - loosely termed notional relations like cause and effect, or manner and purpose - can be exploited in the same way.

For example, the cause relation:

15. I can't cut with this knife because it is bugler.

16. It was so brody that it was impossible to see more than 20 metres.

and the converse relation of effect:

17. I can't hamdung with this knife because it isn't sharp.

18. It was so dark that it was impossible to brockle more than 20 metres.

Another example of a notional relation -that of purpose- is the following:

19. In the Middle Ages, prisoners were often physically tortured in order to make them pogmortle.

This is not unrelated to the notion of instrumentality:

20. In the Middle Ages, prisoners were often tortured with a jubble, in order to extract confessions.

It should be emphasized that in many of these examples it is impossible to identify the 'meaning' of the word exactly. This agrees with the principle of vagueness, which we are aiming to teach students. One can, however, assign certain semantic features to the unknown word, even if one cannot be precise (and, of course, it is rarely that we need or want to be precise). Students are encouraged to look for these semantic features, by asking questions about the unknown word like: Is it animal or human? Is it young or old? or other questions about whatever componential features the context permits one to recover.

Finally, one more type of meaning relation is exploitable, which we call, faute de mieux, pragmatic relations.

At present this is unexplored territory, and the principles of the inter-relationships are undiscovered. Research is continuing in the Research and Development Unit in an attempt to unearth some of the principles. Nevertheless, it is possible already to assert that what is involved is the assignment of semantic features to unknown words, from some feature of the contiguous elements.

We finish with three examples which we call pragmatic. The reader might like to attempt to assign features to the underlined words, and ask himself how he arrived at such an assignment:

21. Tension had been building up for the big event of the day, the Women's 1500 metres. The two compusols, Alison Gould and Marcia Baker, were bitter rivals.

22. Mrs. Mitz did not want to go to the beach, and played a long, drawnout delaying game, which made Albert anxious and troyed, but at last she gave in.

23. Myra fixes up her room, like many kids her age, only after being cludgeoned by her mother; she leaves the breakfast dishes, refuses to do the shopping...

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EL DESARROLLO DE ESTRATEGIAS PARA LA ASIGNACION DE INFORMACION SEMANTICA A LEXEMAS DESCONOCIDOS EN UN TEXTO

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Desde hace tiempo se ha reconocido que cómo enseñar vocabulario es un problema que se presenta a todo maestro de lenguas extranjeras, ya que se considera importante el ayudar a los estudiantes a ampliar su vocabulario, para que puedan manejarse con independencia en la lengua extranjera en sus formas hablada y escrita. No obstante el desarrollo de una metodología para la enseñanza de vocabulario ha permanecido muy atras de, por ejemplo, la enseñanza de estructuras gramaticales, especialmente, pero no únicamente en los cursos de inglés con objetivos específicos -I.O.E.- los cuales tienen el propósito de ayudar al estudiante a leer textos de su especialidad.

En un estudio anterior (Alvarez, 1976) 5 libros sobre IOE fueron seleccionados y se examinaron los procedimientos para la enseñanza de vocabulario. La presentación de técnicas usadas, el formato de los ejercicios y las actividades que se requieren de los estudiantes fueron clasificados. Se encontraron un número muy limitado de tipos de ejercicios en eso.

i) traducción a la lengua materna
ii) paráfrasis (incluyendo definiciones)
iii) definiciones potenciales
iv) procedimientos ilustrativos por medio de imágenes
v) inferencia contextual (rara vez usado, nunca sistemáticamente)

El más inquietante descubrimiento en este estudio es que la inmensa mayoría de los ejercicios no enseñaba realmente a los estudiantes vocabulario, sino que evaluaba el conocimiento de dicho vocabulario, o cuando mucho ejercitaba lo que ya sabían los estudiantes.

Más aún, ninguno de los ejercicios trataba de desarrollar en el estudiante estrategias para adivinar o inferir el significado de palabras desconocidas. Esto se requiere particularmente en el tipo de curso de IOE que estamos desarrollando en la UNAM, donde nos parece importante, no el enseñar a los estudiantes el significado de palabras aisladas con la esperanza de que ellos las recordarán la próxima vez que las encuentren, mucho menos el meramente comprobar el conocimiento de los estudiantes del significado de las palabras, sino más bien el dar a los estudiantes una serie de técnicas para ayudarlos a manejar vocabulario en un texto, mostrarles estrategias para la identificación de significados en contexto. De hecho lo que menos se necesita probablemente en un curso de comprensión de lectura son los ejercicios para ampliar su vocabulario -esto es, el enfoque tradicional para "enseñar" vocabulario- sino lo que nosotros hemos llamado estrategias de ataque del vocabulario (González y MacKay, 1976). Dicho de otra manera, se requieren estrategias para la asignación de información semántica a palabras desconocidas. Otros escritores, incluyendo los del artículo previamente mencionado, han sugerido ciertas formas para enseñar dichas estrategias. Sin embargo, los ejercicios propuestos son en cierta forma tradicionales, y, como se demostrará, no ayudan a resolver el problema central, el cual consiste en la identificación de cuando menos algo del significado de una palabra desconocida.

Una de las llamadas estrategias de ataque, que ha sido usada tradicionalmente por algún tiempo es el estudio de la morfología. Los posibles cambios morfológicos que una palabra puede sufrir son presentados y practicados y el significado del morfema explicado. Por ejemplo, se puede señalar la relación entre

develop	developer	development
o		
practice	practical	practically

El problema consiste en que el estudiante desconoce el significado del lexema básico (develop, practice), por lo tanto el conocimiento de los cambios morfológicos no lo va a ayudar a encontrar su significado.

Igualmente se han desarrollado ejercicios para ayudar a los estudiantes a identificar partes del discurso y es claro que la información gramatical puede conllevar significado. La identificación de palabras como sustantivos, no advervios, probablemente ayuda a uno a dividir la oración y llegar a la sintaxis, lo cual ayude a formular predicciones del posible significado de la oración. No obstante, debemos considerar que este tipo de ejercicio no llega a la raíz del problema, que es la identificación del significado semántico (casi siempre léxica).

Naturalmente, existen ejercicios para enseñar a los estudiantes cómo usar el diccionario y dichos ejercicios son útiles. En realidad, ellos han hecho un uso pedagógico de enfoques semánticos tradicionales, e.g. la noción de polisemia ("mouth of a river", "ear of corn") y homonimia ("bank" meaning "side of river", and "financial institution"). Dichos ejercicios de cualquier forma, sólo confirman al estudiante que las palabras son importantes, que se debe tener un conocimiento exacto de los significados y que hay que usar el diccionario para lograr esto. Esto no nos parece apropiado por dos razones.

Primero, no es necesario el dar un significado exacto a todas las palabras en un texto dado que no es importante conocer los significados exactos. Frecuentemente se considera que para entender un texto es esencial saber lo que cada palabra significa. Esta consideración no está justificada y precisamente se debería enseñar a los estudiantes a ignorar una parte del texto. Esto, naturalmente, es particularmente importante cuando se enseña a los estudiantes la habilidad para la lectura exploratoria pero también es importante cuando se enseña a los estudiantes a adivinar el significado. Se debe estimular a los estudiantes a ignorar las palabras desconocidas y continuar leyendo hasta

el final del párrafo y entonces decidir si la palabra es importante o no. Si después de leer todo el párrafo se decide que la palabra es importante entonces se aplicará alguna de las estrategias. El enfoque de palabra por palabra al igual que el de evaluación ignoran ambos un principio fundamental en la identificación de vocabulario, el de la vaguedad. Es un hecho que cuando por primera vez encontramos una palabra desconocida en la lengua materna, su significado es reconocido sólo vagamente y que el conocimiento del significado de esa palabra se construye y clarifica solo con la repetición de la palabra en diferentes contextos. De hecho, la mayor parte del tiempo nos sentimos satisfechos con manejar solamente las más vagas nociones del significado de muchas palabras, simplemente porque una gran exactitud no es necesaria para entender un texto en particular. Y sin embargo esperamos que los estudiantes sean capaces de definir las palabras desde la primera vez que las ven (como en el enfoque de evaluación).

Y sin embargo cuando leemos, por ejemplo, a Dickens, ¿cuántas veces en nuestra propia lengua tenemos que buscar en un diccionario el significado de las palabras desconocidas en cuanto a prendas de vestir, o vehículos en desuso? Seguramente la mayoría de nosotros se siente satisfecho con una vaga idea del significado y no ha tenido que recurrir a un diccionario.

Esto nos trae a nuestro segundo argumento contra la forma tradicional de cómo usar el diccionario ya que precisamente hace esto. Mientras que deberíamos enseñar a los estudiantes a no depender del diccionario, a desarrollar estrategias para la identificación de significado dentro del texto y desarrollar una tolerancia de vaguedad la cual presuntamente poseen en su lengua materna.

La otra forma tradicional aconsejada a los estudiantes son los llamados ejercicios de ampliación del vocabulario, los cuales de hecho enfocan lo que nosotros necesitamos en el "uso del contexto". Desgraciadamente este consejo

solamente se da sin decirle al estudiante cómo hacerlo. Cualquier trabajo dado a los estudiantes es presentado en una forma totalmente asistemática, mientras que lo que nosotros necesitamos es enseñar al estudiante como usar el contexto. Para hacer ésto, sostenemos que necesitamos conocer los principios que limitan la semántica al ser operada por el contexto. Si podemos encontrar estos principios entonces podremos ayudar a nuestros estudiantes más que si solamente los dejamos inducir de nuestras preguntas de evaluación lo que no puede ser explícito. Asi que en vez de exhortar a los estudiantes para usar el contexto, debemos enseñarles cómo hacerlo y esto, hasta donde sabemos, no se hace en ningún lugar.

De cualquier forma, creemos que es posible usar estos acercamientos al significado partiendo de la semántica estructural para dilucidar algunos de estos principios junto con el uso de estos acercamientos (Lyons, 1969) en los ejercicios de vocabulario que nosotros hemos desarrollado en la Unidad de Desarrollo e Investigación, hemos también incorporado lo que puede ser considerada una importante innovación metodológica, el uso de palabras inventadas.

La equivocación metodológica en todos los anteriores ejercicios, pero especialmente en los de tipo evaluativo, es el de pedir a los estudiantes que identifiquen palabras reales. La objeción para usarlas se basa en dos hechos: aprenderán la estrategia que supuestamente se les está enseñando y segundo a pesar de lo que el maestro trata de enseñar el estudiante puede ignorarlo y acudir al diccionario cuando lo que el estudiante debería aprender es cómo evitar el usar el diccionario como apoyo. Con las palabras sin significado el estudiante no puede acudir al diccionario. El único significado real de dichas palabras es dado por el contexto, el cual debe dar una idea completa de la estrategia a desarrollarse. Más aún, estas palabras inventadas deben ser preferidas a los espacios en blanco, dado que los espacios no tienen significado mientras que las palabras, aún las palabras inventadas, lo llegan a ad-

quirir. También el usar palabras inventadas en el ejercicio se asemeja más a la situación real que enfrenta el estudiante cuando al leer encuentra una palabra nueva.

Lo que sigue son ejemplos de algunas relaciones semánticas usadas en ejercicios desarrollados en nuestra unidad. Otras relaciones semánticas pueden ser ejemplificadas de la misma manera.

I. Hiponimia

Esta es una relación en la cual un término está incluído en el otro, 'animal - marsupial - canguro'. El término más general es el "superordinate" y los menos generales son cohipónimos ("kangaroo, wallaby, koala bear"). Podemos usar este conocimiento para construir el siguiente tipo de ejercicios.

1. Michael gave me a beautiful bunch of flowers: roses, dahlias, margueritas, chrysanthemums, nogs and orchids.

En todos los siguientes ejercicios al estudiante se le solicita que adivine el significado de la palabra subrayada "del contexto" el cual es, naturalmente, especialmente manipulado para indicar un cierto principio de organización semántica en un texto.

En el ejemplo anterior el término más genérico es dado como una ayuda más. En el siguiente ejemplo ha sido suprimido.

2. Even in the poorest parts of the country, people usually have a table, some chairs, a roup and a bed.

En este caso los estudiantes deben identificar las características semánticas de la palabra desconocida del significado de los cohipónimos. Nótese que no se le pide al estudiante el definir la palabra desconocida, sino simplemente decir lo que él puede inferir acerca de su significado a través del contexto. Así se le enseña el principio de vaguedad y se le estimula para no buscar el "significado" de la palabra. En realidad, no podría encontrar tal "signifi-

do" puesto que, como la palabra en cuestión fue inventada, éste no existe.

Alternativamente a la identificación de las características de los hipónimos, se le puede pedir al estudiante que identifique la palabra más genérica.

3. Over the last 20 years, our family has owned a great variety of wurgs: poodles, dachshunds, dalmatians, Yorkshire Terriers, and even St Bernards.

II. Opuestos

a) Incompatibilidad

Esta relación tiene que ver con el concepto de hiponimia, dado que en cierta forma los cohipónimos son opuestos o incompatibles. Por ejemplo en el área de los colores, si cierto color no es rojo, entonces puede ser azul o amarillo, o verde, etc. Similarmente si es rojo, entonces no puede ser ni amarillo, ni azul, ni verde, etc. Esto nos conduce al siguiente ejercicio:

4. If I don't buy a blue car, then I might buy a fobble one.

b) Antonimia

Esta relación se refiere a las palabras como "grande", "pequeño", algunas veces llamados adjetivos de grado. Lo interesante de esta relación es que algo que no es grande no es necesariamente pequeño y así tenemos oraciones que aparentemente son contradictorias pero que en realidad no lo son, por ejemplo:

Un pequeño elefante es un animal grande.

Es posible ver esta relación en listas simples, donde la posición de la palabra en la lista da una clave para una característica semántica:

5. Repugnant, horrible, ugly, plain, pretty, beautiful, fopple

o en el discurso:

6. These reactions proceed from the group as a whole, and can assume a great variety of forms, from putting to death, corporal punishment, expulsion from the tribe to the expression of ridicule and the nurdling of cordwangles.

Lógicamente la palabra desconocida no necesita estar colocada en cualquiera de los dos extremos.

7. Catastrophic, terrible, bad, bungay, good, excellent

c) Complementaridad

Esta relación se refiere a los popularmente llamados "opuestos", dado que el negativo de un término es automáticamente el otro término,

Asi: no masculino = femenino

8. No, John isn't married, he's meed.

9. Well, if it isn't a mungle horse, it must be a female horse.

d) Complementación recíproca

Esto se ejemplifica así:

Si yo le doy algo a Memo, él lo recibe de mí.

10. Smith bought the house from Jones for $ 20,000 who had paid $ 10,000 for it. Jones thus oweed the house for $ 10,000 profit.

III. Sinonimia

Frecuentemente se dice que no existen los auténticos sinónimos. Esto muy bien puede ser cierto tomando el lenguaje como sistema, pero definitivamente inexacto para cualquier texto. De hecho la sinonimia es dependiente del contexto y por tal razón es frecuentemente usada como un instrumento de cohesión en un texto. Por lo tanto, los sinónimos son frecuentemente identificables en un texto por medio de otros instrumentos de cohesión como la aná

fora:

> 11. If you asked an average lawyer to explain our courts, the nerk would probably begin like this: our frugs have three different functions. One blurk is to determine the facts of a particular case. The second function is to decide which laws apply to the facts of that particular durgle.

O bien la sinonimia en lugar de referirse a una palabra o a una frase, lo hace a una parte del texto más grande, convirtiéndose en una palabra resumen:

> 12. It used to be commonly believed that a person's intelligence was affected entirely by the environment in which a person was brought up. This phurgle was particularly common among people who might be thought of as liberals, and a great deal of effort went into attempts to prove that heredity had no influence. The usual subjects of such wandlobows were identical twins. . .

Aparte de las relaciones semánticas, otros tipos de relaciones de significados pueden ser explotadas de la misma manera:

La estructura retórica del texto puede dar claves para encontrar los significados de palabras desconocidas, asi que los estudiantes deberán ser entrenados para no ignorar este hecho. El uso de los siguientes ejemplos en el texto pueden elucidar el significado de palabras desconocidas:

> 13. Another problem is posed by granged waters, examples of which are the Persian Gulf, the Baltic Sea and the Red Sea, where the extension of limits to 200 miles would close the seas to outsiders.

(Esto por supuesto da la relación de hiponimia, vista desde otro ángulo).

Las definiciones frecuentemente aparecen en el texto y los estudiantes deben entrenarse para estar conscientes de las formas que caracterizan a una definición.

14. The purpose of the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference was to find solutions to the problem or regulating fandangle, that is, the use of the oceans by different countries.

Por supuesto, es posible hacer ejercicios similares con otras estructuras retóricas sacando provecho de palabras que explicitan la relación, como "therefore", "however" .

Otras relaciones de significado -generalmente conocidas como relaciones nocionales como causa y efecto o modo y propósito- pueden ser explotadas de la misma forma.

Por ejemplo, la relación de causa

15. I can't cut with this knife because it is bugler.
16. It was so brody that it was impossible to see more than 20 metres.

y la relación de efecto

17. I can't hamdung with this knife because it isn't sharp.
18. It was so dark that it was impossible to brockle more than 20 metres.

Otro ejemplo de una relación nocional -propósito- es la siguiente:

19. In the Middle Ages, prisoners were often physically tortured in order to make them pogmortle

La cual no es independiente de la noción de instrumentalidad:

20. In the Middle Ages, prisoners were often tortured with a jubble, in order to extract confessions.

Debe ser enfatizado que es imposible la identificación exacta del significado de la palabra. Esto está de acuerdo con el principio de vaguedad que nosotros deseamos enseñar a los estudiantes. Sin embargo uno puede asignar ciertas características semánticas a la palabra desconocida, aún si no se puede

ser exacto (y por lo tanto es muy raro que necesitemos o queramos ser exactos). A los estudiantes se les estimula a buscar esas características semánticas mediante la formulación de preguntas acerca de la palabra desconocida, como ¿Es animal o humano? ¿Es joven o viejo? u otras preguntas acerca de cualquiera de las características componentes que el contexto nos permita recuperar.

Finalmente, un tipo más de relaciones de significado explotable, al cual llamaremos, a falta de algo mejor, relaciones pragmáticas.

Hasta ahora este es un territorio inexplorado y los principios de interrelaciones están por descubrirse. Investigación continua para descubrir estos principios está siendo llevada a cabo en la Unidad de Investigación y Desarrollo. No obstante es ya posible afirmar que lo que está involucrado es la asignación de características semánticas a palabras desconocidas, de alguna característica de elementos contiguos.

Terminaremos con tres ejemplos que nosotros llamamos pragmáticos. El lector puede tratar de asignar características a las palabras subrayadas y preguntarse a sí mismo cómo asignó ese valor semántico.

21. Tension had been building up for the big event of the day, the Women's 1500 metres. The two compusols, Alison Gould and Marcia Baker, were bitter rivals.

22. Mrs. Mitz did not want to go to the beach, and played a long drawnout delaying game, which made Albert anxious and troyed, but at last she gave in.

23. Myra fixes up her room like many kids her age, only after being cludgeoned by her mother; she leaves the breakfast dishes, refuses to do the shopping . . .